ABSTRACT

A conventional router can be used as a context-sensitive switch by encoding a header (e.g., a source and/or destination field of an address header) of a data packet with information descriptive of the data contained in a payload of the data packet and programming a router to route data packets based on an addressing scheme that corresponds to the encoded information in the packet header. The encoded packets are routed based on the encoded information. The descriptive information can include dynamic pricing information (e.g., bid/ask pricing), for example, for goods/services available in commerce. The addressing scheme can correspond to a classification hierarchy having multiple levels such as a category level, a topic level, and/or a sub-topic level.

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